

Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *Annual Capital Expenditures* Statistics Users Respondent Base

U.S. Census Bureau
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

(1) Monthly

0.0%;	0	None
59.6%;	84	Retail Sales
50.4%;	71	Wholesale Trade
66.0%;	93	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
59.6%;	84	Housing Starts
54.6%;	77	Building Permits
53.9%;	76	New Home Sales
55.3%;	78	Value of New Construction Put in Place
38.3%;	54	Housing Completions
37.6%;	53	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
44.0%;	62	New Residential Construction
24.1%;	34	New Mobile Home Placements
51.1%;	72	Monthly Imports and Exports
71.6%;	101	Current Industrial Reports
68.8%;	97	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

Replies 141; Forms 154

(2) Quarterly

59.3%;	64	Quarterly Financial Report
84.3%;	91	Current Industrial Reports
6.5%;	7	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
15.7%;	17	Quarterly Tax Survey
8.3%;	9	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

Replies 108; Forms 154

(3) Annual

56.5%;	87	Annual Retail Trade
51.3%;	79	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
36.4%;	56	Annual Survey of Communications
37.7%;	58	Transportation Annual Survey
40.3%;	62	Service Annual Survey
50.6%;	78	County Business Patterns

26.0%;	40	ZIP Code Business Patterns
50.6%;	78	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
33.8%;	52	Characteristics of New Housing
38.3%;	59	Annual Building Permits
28.6%;	44	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
100.0%;	154	Annual Capital Expenditures
87.0%;	134	Annual Survey of Manufactures
72.1%;	111	Current Industrial Reports
33.8%;	52	Research and Development Survey
48.1%;	74	Plant Capacity Utilization
13.6%;	21	Education Finance Survey
20.1%;	31	State Tax Collection Survey
9.7%;	15	Annual Public Employee Retirement
18.8%;	29	Annual Survey of Public Employment
16.2%;	25	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
27.3%;	42	State Government Finances
54.5%;	84	Annual Imports and Exports

Replies 154; Forms 154

II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

89.4%;	135	Printed Publications	19.2%;	29	FAX
74.8%;	113	World Wide Web (Internet)	16.6%;	25	Direct (E-mail) delivery
43.0%;	65	CD-ROMs	1.3%;	2	Regular mail
23.2%;	35	Diskettes	7.3%;	11	Other

Replies 151; Forms 154

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- Economic Bulletin Board
 - from others in the organization we use ftp site extensively.
 - Library
 - Electronic "Bulletin Boards"
 - Check values by telephone
 - also use microfiche in some cases.
 - time-share vendor (private)
 - Internet, ProNet
 - FTP - Internet
 - Overnight Delivery of NIA data
 - FTP
 - STAT-USA+WEFA Group
-

(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

67.1%;	98	Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)
30.8%;	45	Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)
26.0%;	38	ASCII delimited
19.2%;	28	ASCII flat files
18.5%;	27	Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually

13.7%; 20 Do not manipulate data
3.4%; 5 Other

Replies 146; Forms 154

- Sas data sets
- Charts and Trends
- Text files: txt. or PRN
- So we can manipulate.

4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

51.6%;	66	5	20.3%;	26	3	5.5%;	7	1
10.2%;	13	4	4.7%;	6	2	7.8%;	10	Don't know

Replies 128; Forms 154

(7) b. E-mail notification:

55.9%;	71	5	16.5%;	21	3	5.5%;	7	1
11.0%;	14	4	4.7%;	6	2	6.3%;	8	Don't know

Replies 127; Forms 154

(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

63.8%;	81	5	9.4%;	12	3	5.5%;	7	1
13.4%;	17	4	0.8%;	1	2	7.1%;	9	Don't know

Replies 127; Forms 154

(9) d. Search:

70.4%;	95	5	11.9%;	16	3	0.0%;	0	1
14.1%;	19	4	1.5%;	2	2	2.2%;	3	Don't know

Replies 135; Forms 154

(10) e. Download complete data sets:

73.5%;	100	5	11.0%;	15	3	0.0%;	0	1
8.8%;	12	4	2.9%;	4	2	3.7%;	5	Don't know

Replies 136; Forms 154

(11) f. Download selected data:

77.4%;	106	5	8.0%;	11	3	0.7%;	1	1
8.0%;	11	4	2.9%;	4	2	2.9%;	4	Don't know

Replies 137; Forms 154

(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

23.4%;	29	5	33.1%;	41	3	8.9%;	11	1
16.1%;	20	4	11.3%;	14	2	7.3%;	9	Don't know

Replies 124; Forms 154

(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

38.9%;	49	5	17.5%;	22	3	10.3%;	13	1
19.0%;	24	4	11.9%;	15	2	2.4%;	3	Don't know

Replies 126; Forms 154

(14) i. Charts and graphs:

34.6%;	44	5	15.0%;	19	3	16.5%;	21	1
15.0%;	19	4	15.0%;	19	2	3.9%;	5	Don't know

Replies 127; Forms 154

(15) j. Geographic maps:

27.5%;	33	5	15.0%;	18	3	20.0%;	24	1
15.0%;	18	4	13.3%;	16	2	9.2%;	11	Don't know

Replies 120; Forms 154

(16) k. Other, please specify:

72.7%;	8	electronic bulletin board	27.3%;	3	Other
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Replies 11; Forms 154

- Internet site very important to receive data from.
 - electronic
 - Update full report at release time
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(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

100.0%;	1	5	0.0%;	0	3	0.0%;	0	1
0.0%;	0	4	0.0%;	0	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 1; Forms 154

III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

19.2%;	28	No	80.8%;	118	Yes
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Replies 146; Forms 154

(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

70.1%;	103	5+ years	46.3%;	68	trends up to 1 year
68.0%;	100	trends up to 5 years	0.0%;	0	Other
49.0%;	72	latest 1 or 2 periods			

Replies 147; Forms 154

(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

62.5%;	90	Create value-added products/services
39.6%;	57	Perform patron/client inquiries
27.8%;	40	Inform marketing decisions
23.6%;	34	Republish in newspaper/journal
18.1%;	26	Inform investment decisions
17.4%;	25	Store reports/printouts for archival purposes
6.9%;	10	Locate new sites
0.7%;	1	Other

Replies 144; Forms 154

- [none]
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(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

80.1%;	117	Definition of terms
58.2%;	85	Sampling and estimation methodology
58.2%;	85	Narrative text describing survey results
49.3%;	72	Survey design
5.5%;	8	None
2.7%;	4	Other

Replies 146; Forms 154

- Direct contact with Census analysts
 - research
 - Comparisons to earlier surveys and/or similar data from other agencies--e.g. census to BEA in one estimates.
 - footnotes (CIR)
-

(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

- Non-residential building permit data.
- R & D expenditures by industry (2 & 3 - digit codes) capital expenditures by industry (2 & 3 - digit codes)
- Capital Outlays Quarterly By Industry
- Information on nonresidential construction.
- "807" Production-sharing trade at the 2-digit SIC level showing total U.S. import value and the value of U.S. components sent offshore for assembly.
- Need more monthly physical output data for manufacturing.
- Foreign trade - exports & imports - by 4-digit (data that had been available in "Trades Employment") - without SIC (& soon NAIC), cannot compare trade with domestic activity.
- No.
- MCD Business Patterns, Massachusetts is doing away with county government, MCD income estimates.
- Timely release of data in an easy-to-access format (ie: XLS, 123, etc.) with revisions and option of pulling complete time series.

- Non-residential building permits--number by type of building.
- We use and would like to continue to use retail sales by county data and the merchandise line sales data.
- Int'l trade data on internet are inadequate. Only press releases are there. When data are revised, if data are not in the press release, there is no way to get the revisions (ex: monthly data from exhibits 6&7 of FT900).
- Better capital expenditure data and Better motor vehicle data.
- Non-residential building permits data nad value of new non-residential construction part in place.
- Plant (establishment) closings; No. employed occup. composition of "salaried employees" (Census of Mfrs.)
- Keeping ____ disaggregated data sets ____ possible that are consistent, and therefore directly comparable is very helpful.
- We are always looking for very current information. We normally use Census dat for historical trends and background.
- Resume geographic estimates of retail sales.
- Current input-output reports; 5 yrs. is too old!
- YES! Bring back non-residential state/local permits authorized! This was a severe loss for interpreting local economic trends. Also, more geographic detail, more frequently.
- Seasonal Population - estimates. More information on affordable housing-market.
- Monthly Retail Sales for U.S. Metropolitan Areas.
- Yes. I have been looking for cost dat for pollution data for different pollutants by categories for the last years from 1993 +, but could not.
- More frequent substate mtg. stats (annual survey is state wide only)
- More detailed annual (quarterly) production data on high technologies (electronics).
- Household Expenditure Data at State Level.
- Pollution abatement expenditures by SIC
- investment plans by SIC
- Would like Government Finance series in print form.
- The 1997 Census is not out yet.
- Non-residential Building permits.
- Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
- Yes, but this will always be the cas!
- Geographic data by product class, especially in county business patterns. Totals at the 4-digit industry level aren't detailed enough.
- Move capital expenditure data--more frequent, more detailed
- Service Data on an manual/quarterly/monthly basis by 2,3, & 4-digit SIC!
- Website is extremely difficult to navigate.
- The annual survey of manufacturers needs to be in ASCII or pdf format; as well as pdf. We spend too many hours re-entering the data.
- Would like to see MA33L on quarterly basis.
- Elimination of Group II sales data and problems
- Detailed data on capital investment, by detailed asset type, by 3-digit industry--at least every 5 years.
- Median income and poverty tables are not in spreadsheet form (they one were).
- Imports and exports by 4-digit SIC. Very important--in print. Publication form--quarterly.
- Quarterly data, analyzed growth rates for all statistics. Currently, only some fo the data is shown as a quarterly growth rat analyzed.
- MSA retail sales
- Monthly service sector sales counterpart data st to retail, wholesale, and manufacturing shipments.
- We have a need for long historical time series and for long-term forecasts.
- Far better data on service sector; tons of coverage. Need data on enterprises as well as establishments.
- Information about how well the ACES programs capture new business formation and business deaths.
- Non-residential building permit data collection should be restored by state and metro area!
- Yes-I need non-residential construction series (commercial, industrial, etc.) on a geographic basis-as used to be done!

IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

79.3%;	115	4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)
46.2%;	67	2-digit major groups
45.5%;	66	3-digit industry groups
42.1%;	61	Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade
4.1%;	6	NA (don't use SIC-based data)
4.8%;	7	Other

Replies 145; Forms 154

- Individual Products 7-Digit level
 - 8-DIGIT D & B Database
 - Highly disaggregated trade data
 - 3
 - Greater detail when available
 - sub-groups within 4-digit
 - seven digit
-

(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

22.3%;	33	I was unaware of this
25.0%;	37	I am partially aware, but lack details
52.7%;	78	I am aware and understand some implications

Replies 148; Forms 154

12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

85.7%;	90	A brochure that explains NAICS	40.0%;	42	Conference announcements
71.4%;	75	NAICS implementation plans	4.8%;	5	Other

Replies 105; Forms 154

- A manual and numerical list
 - Definitions of NAICS codes.
 - I am awaiting CD-ROM!
 - Booklet with new codes
-

(27) No Thanks -

65.9%;	29	I will check the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/naics)
34.1%;	15	I don't need more information about NAICS

Replies 44; Forms 154

V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

(28) 13. Type of organization.

40.1%;	59	Business	4.8%;	7	Individual
27.2%;	40	Government	2.7%;	4	Media
15.0%;	22	Academic/Research	0.7%;	1	Library
8.2%;	12	Association	1.4%;	2	Other

Replies 147; Forms 154

- Market Research/Publishing
 - Library (University)
-

(29) 14. Do you work in your organization's library?

24.3%;	36	Yes	75.7%;	112	No
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Replies 148; Forms 154

(30) 15. What is your affiliation with the Census Bureau?

73.0%;	108	None	2.0%;	3	Census Information Center
6.8%;	10	State Data Center	15.5%;	23	Other
2.7%;	4	Business/Industry Data Center			

Replies 148; Forms 154

- Affiliate of the State Data Center
- Industry & Business Analysts in Maryland
- user of Census data
- State Government Agency.
- Special Sworn Employee
- Richmond Public Library, BST Dept. 101 E. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23219
- Former Advisory Committee member and CES researcher.
- User: Occupations/Ind. data; Census Mfrs. data.
- Federal User
- Employed by US DOC/BXA
- Cooperator in disseminating permits authorized data
- Census Liason
- Research
- unsure
- Government
- Depository
- Affiliate Data Center
- Fund the CIR-MA35N
- DOC Staff
- Data use.
- GPO Depository
- BEA, U.S. Department of Commerce
- Government agency

(35) 20. May we contact you to follow up on this questionnaire?

85.6%; 125 Yes

14.4%; 21 No

Replies 146; Forms 154

(36) Question 21. Remarks:

- I make extensive use of Census Bureau data. My greatest wish would be to have access to disaggregated data (ie. below the national, and state levels) on a more timely basis.
- 1). It is important to be able to retrieve data in easy to use formats (spreadsheet or ascii)- "pdf" formats are convenient to print, but difficult to use. 2). Please see question 9. 3). We are concerned about the discontinuity in time series data that will occur with NAICS. The 1987 SIC change was a significant problem-NAICS will likely be much worse. Any help from Census (bridges, publication of data in both classifications) would be a great help to data users.
- I support the move toward Internet data delivery because it should make data available faster and at a lower cost. the challenge is to make it easy for the widest variety of data users as possible to retrieve the data they need.

Example: I use County Business Patterns to track number of establishments for certain industries by state. I believe that users on the Internet currently can select only one year at a time and one state at a time. the ability to put together summary tables based on selections would help a lot.

- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my news off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
- When is 1997 Census to be available? Please keep as much of the data in print as possible-- Thanks!
- --But please ask for Deborah Foster.

Thank you.

- You have set up an excellent web site that is easy to use, fast and usually supplies me with the information I'm seeking.
- Census data has proven invaluable to in-depth country comparisons of productivity in sectors extremely valuable organization.

Please keep going with the detailed data, comparable time series (IS NAICS comparable?) and aggregate numbers.

- Your credibility is a great strength.
- DOC DOES GREAT JOB. HAVE USED PRODUCTS/SERVICES FOR REFERENCE MANY TIMES.

THANKS.

- We serve a varied clientele (academic, business, government, and private citizens) and work across many subjects. Census data are absolutely vital to us. Our biggest need is for more geographic area detail more frequently (state, county, place, if possible). Users often do not understand the 5 yr. gaps and lag time for the major Economic Surveys that offer such detail, much less the 10 yr. decennial cycle. The internet is a great help in speeding "publication", but we find access is not yet universal. We still download and print entire documents for guide reference and historical purposes. I am concerned about just how long the electronic media will remain accurate and usable as technology changes. How will the Bureau deal with these problems?
- Please contact ASAP: Bob Davidson, Gov't Information Service Section Palm Beach county Library System Service

3650 SUMMIT BLVD. 33406
(561) 233-2600, ext. 164
email Robert ID@PB.SEFLIN.ORG

- Good job on the web site.
- Would like more detail on Semiconductor Industry (SIC 3674) and SIC 3661 & 3669 communications equipment. Also, computers SIC 3575,3577,3578, 35,79. Would like more details on subcategories in terms of sales dollars and total units sold.
- I believe this survey contains a lot of information to be used.
- You provide very useful information. Please do not switch any data over to PDF if possible make ASM and Census Manufacturing available as text or some other useable format.
- Respondent provided voluminous, illegible comments throughout that could not be deciphered to record.
- State and Local Government Finance Estimates, by State. We appreciate having this information on the Internet but wish the report was still published. Is there any way of compiling the data sooner? It is almost too old to be of any use.
- We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
- Current setup on the web is extremely frustratingly for someone trying to print/download data and reports

-> Make .XLS files available with lots of historical data.

___ Use .PDF filrds for pasting your releases -Having to flow ascii into a word processor and reformat is not the way to go. Email sub would be helpful

- I appreciate receiving this survey.
- I think the advancements on the Web over the past few years have been excellent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has put much of this data in raw form on their FTP site. I'd like to see the Census Bureau make the FTP site more accessible and have more information.
- Please update my address in your records. Thanks!
- We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.
- Will all Census data be available only via the Internet? My customers prefer printed format. Thank you.
- More documentation and instructions for obtaining data from gohper directories would be helpful.
- I appreciate the value of your service! Educators use information for social profit.
- Surveys are informative; Good source for benchmarking; Would like to see more details on industries.
- Please arrange for the Annual Cap Exp to be stopped. ie. Drop my firm from the mailing list.

Figure 1: